



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

"Contradiction is after all a tame and harmless thing, although a very interesting one!"¹⁶

The difficulties multiply when we pass from perception to memory and anticipation. For, according to Mr. Holt, the nervous system responds specifically to neutral propositions and contradictions in the past and future as well as in the present. Any one who remembers having stopped at some cathedral city in Europe and having seen a Gothic vaulting is twice in error, for both "stopping" and "Gothic vaultings" are contradictions. Every Tommy who, going "over the top," is anticipating a lively scrap is in error, for surely a scrap is a "collision," and a "collision" is a contradiction.

Mr. Holt's philosophy has certainly avoided the crime of explaining error away, a crime which he accuses so many philosophies of having committed. He seems rather to have gone so far out of the way of this felony that he has explained innumerable errors into existence. His theory should be the envy of the maieutic profession, for from the womb of being it continuously and with painless delivery brings buxom errors to birth whose imminent advent no prognostician ever even suspected, or could suspect, seeing that the bones of many of the children are as yet unformed.

And in the case of anticipation still another difficulty is added to complete our confusion. For "ideas of the future may be a trifle more liable to error than ideas of the present or past."¹⁷ Are there then just a few more contradictions in the neutral realm of the future than in that of the past or the present? Or is the nervous system a trifle more responsive to future contradictions than to those past and present? It would seem as if we must choose one of these alternatives, for to be more liable to error in our ideas of the future must mean, of course, to be more liable to get future contradictions into our consciousness. Or—it is indeed risky to suggest it—is it possible that some other conception of error has slipped in here, a conception that Mr. Holt has been theoretically opposing all along, but practically uses because it is one that no amount of explaining error will explain away?

EVANDER BRADLEY MCGILVARY.

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN.

REVIEWS AND ABSTRACTS OF LITERATURE

The History of European Philosophy. WALTER T. MARVIN. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1917. Pp. xiii + 439.

Professor Marvin's *History of Philosophy* is both a source of delight and a source of regret. It is a source of delight because Pro-

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ C. C., p. 252.

fessor Marvin knows how a history of philosophy ought to be written. It is a source of regret because he has not written such a history. Why he has not written such a history is obvious; it is because that kind of a history can not be written. But Professor Marvin has done the next best thing, he has given a laboratory manual and a bibliography from which the student can construct a history for himself, a history which will come to him as a discovery and not as a presentation.

How should a history of philosophy be written? One should, I dare say, write the history of philosophy much as Plato wrote philosophy. By skilful stage-setting Plato creates a situation in which the truth he wishes to present comes as an impression rather than as a positive statement of fact. So far as is possible within the compass of a very small book it seems to me that Professor Marvin has followed this method with marked success. It may be designated as an attempt to introduce the experimental method into the philosophical sciences. This is accomplished partly in what the author himself says in the way of helpful suggestions, but much more in the excellent selection of bibliographies appended to the end of each section. The bibliographies are, I think, the best and most useful for actual work to be found in any history of philosophy which has yet appeared.

The book is in three parts. Part I. consists largely in historical methodology. Professor Marvin begins in the right place and in the right way, though one wishes that he had said a little more about the philosophy of history and the psychology of learning. And one has the feeling, too, that he has not tied the expository part of his book quite closely enough to the Introduction.

The task which the historian of philosophy sets for himself to perform is to write the history of those general ideas which have been of controlling influence in shaping the affairs of men. That *in some sense* general ideas exist is a fact that no one doubts. And that in some sense, whether true or false, they exert a powerful influence on human affairs is likewise a fact beyond dispute; though it is a rather sad fact that they often attain popular acceptance only after they have outlived their usefulness, and thus become hindrances rather than aids to progress. To investigate these general and abstract ideas, to show how they originate, and to relate them to the various movements and tendencies of the ages in which they appear is the chief task of the historian of philosophy. The successful performance of this task involves a recourse to other sciences as aids, chief of which are anthropology and psychology. Thus Professor James, speaking the language of anthropology, tells us that Kantian categories instead of being fixed and eternal principles are rather

survivals of remote ancestral ways of responding to life. And surely Cornford has made much of early Greek philosophy intelligible by the use of the anthropological method of "collective representation." The introductory part of Professor Marvin's book is concerned largely with anthropology. Such topics as "The Recency of Civilization," "Primitive Thought" and its gradual development into science are those that receive attention.

Much light has also been thrown on historical interpretation by behavioristic psychology. Probably no chapter in any language is more useful to the historian of philosophy than the chapter on "Memory and the Learning Process" in Ladd and Woodworth's *Physiological Psychology*. From the point of view there suggested general ideas are standardized modes of response. We do things in a certain way because others before us have done them that way, not that we imitate the past, but rather because the past survives, is conserved and utilized in the present. I think that Professor Marvin has hardly done justice to the psychology of learning and its importance as an aid to historical interpretation. However, the deficiency in the text is made up for in the excellent bibliography at the close of the chapter on "Changes in Man's Mental Nature Wrought by Civilization."

Parts II. and III. of the book are given to an exposition of the main facts that go to make up our intellectual inheritance. Professor Marvin's method has already been indicated. It is not so much to catalogue the facts as to put the student in possession of such information as will enable him to grasp the facts from his own investigation.

Viewing the book as a whole, there are two things which call for special attention and which differentiate this book from most histories of philosophy. The first is the rejection of the stereotyped division of history into ancient, medieval, and modern. Mr. Marvin has only two divisions, ancient and modern. The ancient period stops with the Church Fathers. So-called medieval thought is subsumed under modern. One wonders if it would not have been truer to fact to have subsumed modern thought under medieval! For this twofold division Professor Marvin has the sanction of many contemporary historians who are leading us to doubt the conception of any very definite medieval period. There is, I think, in the periods usually separated as medieval and modern, enough unity in blood and temperament, in method of approach and interest, and in problems considered, to justify the inclusion of all philosophizing under one grand division.

The second noteworthy feature of the book is the close alignment

of philosophy to the general social, economic, political, and scientific movements of the past. General ideas have too frequently been abstracted from their context and set up to form an independent and detached intellectual tradition. Such logic lifting with its criminal implications has been too often indulged in. Histories of philosophy have been too much histories of *abstract* ideas rather than accounts of the relation of *general* ideas to intellectual progress. For, after all, what the serious-minded student of history wants to know is what influence general ideas have had in the determination of human conduct. For back of statecraft and industries, back of institutions, manners, and creeds lie ideas. The justification of a study of the history of philosophy consists for the most part in the light that an analysis of general ideas throws on an interpretation and understanding of human behavior. In this respect Mr. Marvin has succeeded about as well as one can within the compass of a small volume. The closing pages in particular are noteworthy for the sketch they contain of the development of the ideas of toleration, liberalism, and social democracy.

M. T. McCLURE.

TULANE UNIVERSITY.

The Idea of God in the Light of Recent Research: The Gifford Lectures in the University of Aberdeen, 1912, 1913. A. SETH PRINGLE-PATTISON, pp. 5-417, Clarendon Press.

The Idea of God by Professor Seth Pringle-Pattison is a scholarly addition to the series of lectures made possible by the generosity of Lord Gifford. Professor Pringle-Pattison's work is marked throughout by historical thoroughness, breadth of vision, and sincerity and consistency of purpose.

A brief summary of the main argument of the book—for it is an argument—will explain Professor Pringle-Pattison's position. Starting with Hume's *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion* he finds that "the vague residuum of theistic belief which was all Hume considered deducible from the evidence" (p. 24) is significant indication of the tenacity with which man holds to some form of theism. As he passes from Hume to Kant, the author notices with approval Kant's very different method of approach as "not only sound in itself, but the fundamental contention of all idealistic philosophy since his time" (p. 24). Kant, as is well known, employed the idea of moral value to determine the idea of God. After Kant there arose a philosophical conflict, which Professor Pringle-Pattison calls the nineteenth century duel between idealism and naturalism. In this conflict Professor Pringle-Pattison sees on one side a tendency to set the principle of value in opposition to reason—to its own